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ARLINGTON REDEVELOPMENT BOARD

Arlington, Massachusetts
Middlesex, ss

DOCKET NO. 3625

DECISION
Special Permit Under
ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN REVIEW

Applicant: 882-892 Massachusetts Ave., LLC
Property Address: 882-892 Massachusetts Avenue, Arlington, Massachusetts 02476

Hearing Dates: May 18, 2020, continued public hearings on July 6, 2020 and on July 20, 2020
Date of Decision: July 20, 2020

20 Day Appeal Period Ends: August 17, 2020

Members
Approved

David M. Wat
Rachel Zimber
[Signature]

Opposed

Eugene B. Benson

Town Clerk's Certification

Date



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**Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
Redevelopment Board**

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730 Massachusetts Avenue, Arlington, Massachusetts 02476

DECISION OF THE BOARD

**Environmental Design Review Docket #3625
882-892 Massachusetts Avenue, Arlington, MA 02476
882-892 Massachusetts Ave., LLC**

July 20, 2020

This Decision applies to the application by 882-892 Massachusetts Ave., LLC to demolish an existing one-story brick building and construct a mixed-use building at 882-892 Massachusetts Avenue located in the B2 Neighborhood Business District. The site is comprised of two adjoining lots: 882-888 Massachusetts Avenue and 890-892 Massachusetts Avenue. The Board reviewed and approved an Environmental Design Review Special Permit under Section 3.4. The building will include one (1) commercial space and twenty-one (21) one-bedroom residential units. Three (3) units of the 21 total units will be permanently deed-restricted as affordable per Section 8.2 of the Zoning Bylaw. A public hearing was held on May 18, 2020 and continued to July 6, 2020 and to July 20, 2020, when the public hearing was closed.

Materials reviewed for this Decision:

- EDR Public Hearing Memo 882-892 Massachusetts Avenue from Jennifer Raitt, Director of Planning and Community Development, dated May 4, 2020;
- Application for EDR Special Permit dated April 13, 2020 and updated July 15, 2020;
- Amended building and site plans dated May 7, 2020;
- Amended building and site materials dated July 15, 2020
- Supplemental information including correspondence from Kristen Welch, Greater Metropolitan Real Estate, LEED v4 for Building Design and Construction: Homes and Multifamily Lowrise checklist by Market Square Architects, LLC, Stormwater Management Plan, including Drainage Summary and Site Development Plan Set dated April 10, 2020 from Allen & Major Associates, Inc.

The following criteria have been met, per Section 3.3.3, Arlington Zoning Bylaw:

1. Mixed-use is allowed by Special Permit in the B2 Neighborhood Business District. The Zoning Bylaw, in Section 5.5.1 B, indicates that the district is intended for small retail and service establishments serving the needs of adjacent neighborhoods and oriented to pedestrian traffic; and mixed-use buildings. Mixed-use is a combination of two or more distinct land

uses, such as those proposed by this applicant, and the definition encourages such uses to be located in a single, multi-story structure, such as that in the new building at 882-892 Massachusetts Avenue.

2020 JUL 27 PM 1:18

2. The requested use is essential and desirable. The second key finding in the Master Plan notes that *"Massachusetts Avenue has the capacity for growth. It can support mixed-use development commensurate with its function as Arlington's primary commercial corridor. Massachusetts Avenue is accessible to neighborhoods throughout the town; it has frequent bus service, bicycle routes, and good walkability. Increased density through greater building heights and massing would benefit the corridor from an urban design perspective and benefit the town from a fiscal perspective."*(p.8)

This proposal will bring twenty-one (21) new 1-bedroom residential units, of which three will be affordable to households earning at or below 70% of the area median income, and 1,750 square feet of commercial space. The Town has clearly established affordable housing priorities described in its Housing Production Plan (adopted by the Select Board and Redevelopment Board and approved by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development in 2016). There continues to be a need to create new housing opportunities, including market-rate and affordable homes, in the community; this development helps address that demand.

Additionally, the commercial space could be convenient for the surrounding neighborhood which includes abutting residential, commercial, and institutional uses in the following districts: B4, R6, B2A, and R2. Furthermore, there is a supermarket approximately 150 feet from the property and additional neighborhood businesses, amenities, and institutions in the immediate vicinity, including banks, restaurants, a pharmacy, gift shop, exercise studio, pre-school, and Arlington High School. A bus stop with shelter serving multiple routes is on Massachusetts Avenue directly in front of the building.

3. The development will include 23 surface parking spaces for cars, including one ADA accessible van parking space and forty (44) short- and long-term parking spaces for bicycles, 34 indoor spaces and 10 outdoor spaces. The sidewalk will be reconstructed immediately adjacent to the building, including resetting of all granite curbing around the perimeter of the property on Lockland Avenue and Massachusetts Avenue.
4. The development will meet stormwater design standards, including the addition of landscaped areas to the site, a reduction of impervious area, and new catch basin and sump for treatment and reduction of runoff rates. The development will improve, not overload, public utilities.
5. The development will need to meet special regulations of the Affordable Housing bylaw, including making three units that are representative of the mix of units in the building available to eligible households making up to 70% of the area median income. The three units will be equitably dispersed throughout the proposed building.

6. The use does not impair the integrity or character of the neighborhood. The mixed-use building is in keeping with adjacent land uses, particularly along Massachusetts Avenue. New residential units will not impair the integrity or character of the district or the four adjoining districts and it will not be detrimental to health or welfare. The building is consistent with the Design Standards for the Town of Arlington.
7. The use will not be in excess or detrimental to the character of the neighborhood.

The following criteria have been met, per Section 3.4.4, Arlington Zoning Bylaw:

A. EDR-1 Preservation of Landscape

The existing site condition is primarily impervious. Approximately 2,100 square feet of the site will include landscaped areas with vegetation, including a combination of arborvitae, shrubs, and perennial plantings along the property edges. The new landscaping will improve the condition of the property and provide buffers along Lockland Avenue and along the adjacent building at 898 Massachusetts Avenue. A landscaped buffer is located along the eastern edge of the property.

B. EDR-2 Relation of the Building to the Environment

The development is located in the B2 Neighborhood Business District which only includes the existing building on this site and the adjacent parking lot. Heights in the vicinity range from single-story to five-story. The B2A District, across the street, includes a three-story mixed-use building on the site of a former garage. Greater height in certain locations can be beneficial. There is a modest set back from the sidewalk which is similar to the existing building setback against the sidewalk edge. The façade treatment will relate to the building's prominent location and a more active street level use with larger storefront windows will improve the overall relationship of the building to the environment.

C. EDR-3 Open Space

The development will add areas of landscaping to an existing impervious site, including approximately 2,100 square feet of landscaping.

D. EDR-4 Circulation

The development includes 23 spaces for vehicles located at-grade at the rear of the property in an existing parking lot, including one HC vehicle van parking space, indoor and outdoor bicycle parking. The development will improve adjacent infrastructure, including sidewalks, curb cuts, and curb treatments.

E. EDR-5 Surface Water Drainage

The application materials, drainage summary letter, and site development plan show reconstruction of the existing parking lot and an improved stormwater management system. A new catch basin with a sump and hood at the outlet pipe will be installed to provide treatment. This is an improvement over the existing conditions. The proposed design complies with the Town's current stormwater bylaw. Final design materials must be submitted for review and approval by the Town Engineer.

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JUL 27 2020 1:18 PM

2020 JUL 27 PM 1:18

F. EDR-6 Utilities Service

All new utility connections will be underground.

G. EDR-7 Advertising Features

A sign band is included on the building façade and other exterior features.

H. EDR-8 Special Features

All structures are appropriately set back and include appropriate screening of additional structures on the building and in the parking lot.

I. EDR-9 Safety

The development meets all relevant health and safety codes.

J. EDR-10 Heritage

The proposal will include demolition of the existing one-story brick building in order to build a new four-story building. Neither the existing structure nor adjacent structures have been deemed as being historic, traditional, or significant uses, structures, or architectural elements. The proposed massing and preliminary design for the proposed building are compatible with other uses in the immediate neighborhood.

K. EDR-11 Microclimate

There will be no adverse impacts on air and water resources or on temperature levels of the immediate environment.

L. EDR-12 Sustainable Building and Site Design

The proposed building will be LEED certified.

The project must adhere to the following general conditions:

1. The final design, façade materials, landscaping, fencing, lighting, and sign plans and relevant specifications shall be subject to the approval of the Arlington Redevelopment Board. Any substantial or material deviation during construction from the approved plans and specifications is subject to the written approval of the Arlington Redevelopment Board.
2. Any substantial or material deviation during construction from the approved plans and specifications is subject to the written approval of the Arlington Redevelopment Board.
3. The Board maintains continuing jurisdiction over this permit and may, after a duly advertised public hearing, attach other conditions or modify these conditions as it deems appropriate in order to protect the public interest and welfare.

4. Snow removal from all parts of the site, as well as from any abutting public sidewalks, shall be the responsibility of the owner and shall be accomplished in accordance with Town Bylaws.
5. Trash shall be picked up only on Monday through Friday between the hours of 7:00 am and 6:00 pm. All exterior trash and storage areas on the property, if any, shall be properly screened and maintained in accordance with the Town Bylaws.
6. The owner shall provide a statement from the Town Engineer that all proposed utility services have adequate capacity to serve the school. The owner shall provide evidence that a final plan for drainage and surface water removal has been reviewed and approved by the Town Engineer to the Department of Planning and Community Development.
7. Upon installation of landscaping materials and other site improvements, the owner shall remain responsible for such materials and improvement and shall replace and repair as necessary to remain in compliance with the approved site plan.
8. All utilities serving or traversing the site (including electric, telephone, cable, and other such lines and equipment) shall be underground.
9. Upon the issuance of the building permit the Applicant shall file with the Inspectional Services Department and the Police Department the names and telephone numbers of contact personnel who may be reached 24 hours each day during the construction period.

The project must adhere to the following special conditions:

1. The owner shall work with the Department of Planning and Community Development to comply with all requirements of Section 8.2, Affordable Housing Requirements.
2. The affordable units shall be equitably dispersed throughout the building and shall be comparable to market-rate units in terms of location, quality and character, room size, number of rooms, number of bedrooms, and external appearance as approved by the Department of Planning and Community Development.
3. An Affordable Housing Deed Restriction shall be executed with the Town prior to issuance of an Occupancy Permit for the three affordable units.
4. No condominium conversion of said affordable rental units shall be permitted without the express permission of this Board. In the case of a proposed condominium conversion, Applicant shall work with the Department of Planning and Community Development to ensure that the units continue to meet the requirements of Section 8.2.
5. The owner shall make provisions for a restaurant tenant in the commercial space, including location for a grease trap and a chase for black iron venting to the roof.

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2020 JUL 27 PM 1:18
6. The owner shall file an application for all building and property signage for review and approval by this Board.
7. The owner shall install at least one (1) Electric Vehicle charging station in the parking lot.
8. The owner shall install amenities for building residents, including outdoor seating, an outdoor grill, a garden for use by the tenants, and appropriate landscaping, shade, and/or other amenities encouraging outdoor use in the usable open space. The owner shall landscape the smaller areas of the plan labeled not sufficiently sized for usable open space.
9. The owner shall submit a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan for review and approval by the Department of Planning and Community Development.
10. The owner shall submit an updated façade design plan, particularly for the corner entrance to the residences, including building color schemes, for review and approval by the Department of Planning and Community Development.